

Serial No. 09/087,658

Page 3

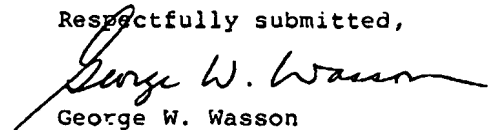
rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this response, claim 16 is cancelled. Claim 17 is amended to include all of the limitations of its base claim (former claim 16) and is believed now to be allowable. Claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 17 (AMENDED) and are believed to be in proper form for allowance. Claim 20 (AMENDED) is amended to be dependent from claim 17 and is therefore believed to be allowable.

This amendment responds to all of the objections and rejections of the Office Action mailed October 12, 1999 and is believed to place this application in condition for allowance; such action is respectfully requested.

If there are any matters still pending, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's attorney by FAX or telephone at the number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,



George W. Wasson
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 17,685
FAX & Tele. No. (925) 283-4420